



## New Legislation

The attached text is an 8-page re-formatted version of the South African Use of Official Languages Act of 2012. We did not use the published PDF because of its large file-size, among other reasons.

This CU version will not correspond to our usual A5 booklet format. It will need to be printed on A4, or on A3 folded to A4 and stapled. What it has allowed us to do is to break up the Act into discrete parts that should make it much more digestible, and allow us to deal with the whole document.

The convention in legal practice is to refer to pages and lines, and we have left the line-numbers in, but we will refer to the pages of our booklet, and not those of the Act. The original PDF of the Act can be obtained from the Government Gazette office, if required.

The Act is designed (page 1):

*"To provide for the regulation and monitoring of the use of official languages by national government for government purposes; to require the adoption of a language policy by a national department, national public entity and national public enterprise; to provide for the establishment and functions of a National Language Unit; to provide for the establishment and functions of language units by a national department, national public entity and national public enterprise; to provide for monitoring of and reporting on use of official languages by national government; to facilitate intergovernmental coordination of language units; and to provide for matters connected therewith."*

The Objects of Act (page 3) are:

- (a) to regulate and monitor the use of official languages for government purposes by national government;
- (b) to promote parity of esteem and equitable treatment of official languages of the Republic;
- (c) to facilitate equitable access to services and information of national government; and
- (d) to promote good language management by national government for efficient public service administration and to meet the needs of the public.

On our page 4, you can see that this act expects every government department, entity and enterprise, to have in place within 18 months of the Act (i.e. by April, 2014) a language policy, which it describes, and which demands that at least three of the national languages are to be named for use.

On pages 5 and 6, the Act prescribes the establishment and functions of Language Units at national and other levels.

On page 6, the monitoring of the language policy is given as the responsibility of the Minister of each department.

On page 7, the Act states that each Minister must make a report annually to the National Assembly.

On page 7 also, the intention is given of forming “intergovernmental forums” so as to make the treatment of language matters more uniform across government departments.

Page 8 refers to regulation and mentions the Pan South African Language Board (PanSALB), which, as we know, is established under the South African Constitution.

## **Comment**

Clearly, this Act is made with the intention of pushing language matters forward by stipulating, in a bureaucratic manner, levels of compliance according to various criteria, in the field of languages.

Up to now we have not heard of a lot of activity as a consequence of this Act. Nor would we expect such response to be even across the many ministries, entities and enterprises. What we would expect is a rush to comply, and a new small industry of consultancy work, set up to provide government departments with paperwork to assist them to pass muster in the terms of this Act.

None of this will of itself generate any good consequences to the benefit of the languages and the language-speakers, writers and readers concerned.

This course of ours does not teach any language, but it looks at the way the society deals with language on the whole. In the process, we have today looked at a full Act of the National Assembly. In contrast to language, which is spontaneously created in the course of its use, a government Act is narrowly confined in a fixed form, and dependent on the existence of numbers of institutions which it requires to give social effect to the formal words of the Act.

- The above is to introduce the original reading-text: [Use of Official Languages Act, 2012, text in 8 pages.](#)
  - A PDF file of the reading text is attached
-



From <http://yosipuedo.com.ar/>  
Yo Si Puedo web site for Argentina

## Alfabetización

*“Un Programa Cubano para poner Fin al Analfabetismo en el Mundo”*

“Yo si puedo” (Yes, I can) is an international programme for the eradication of illiteracy, dating from March, 2001.

It was quite difficult to find more the information given below, on the Internet. What we can understand from it is that this is an extremely successful programme, based on a standard methodology, of which we unfortunately have no samples, as yet. We would like to have some pages from the manuals of the “Yo si puedo” programme.

What we would like to know about this programme, for the purposes of our course on languages, is first, how the vernacular languages (e.g. Aymara and Quechua) are

protected within this literacy programme, in relation to the colonial language (e.g., in that case, Spanish).

Second, we would like to know how the question of cultural content of languages is handled in the “Yo si puedo” method, and related to this, whether there is any political content, whether intentional or *de facto*.

[This Cuban, communistic anti-literacy campaign’ slogan “Yo si puedo” is what Barack Obama ripped off for his election campaign (“Yes, we can”).]

---



## **Cuban literacy method benefits almost six million people around the world**

Almost six million people in 28 countries all over the world have learned to read and write thanks to the Cuban literacy method 'Yo si puedo' (Yes, I Can).

According to Enia Rosa Torres, an advisor to the Cuban Minister of Education, 5.8 million people have already learned to read and write using the 'Yo si puedo' method, while 723,900 others have benefited from a similar Cuban methodology called 'Yo si puedo seguir' (Yes, I Can Continue), which guarantees elementary instruction.

During a press conference in Havana on Wednesday, Torres said that there are currently more than 2,200 Cuban education specialists making a contribution in 28 countries, with priority given to the member nations of the Bolivarian Alliance for the Peoples of the Americas (ALBA).

The official noted that, thanks to the efforts of the Cuban professionals and the methodology, Venezuela, in 2002; Bolivia, in 2009; and Nicaragua, in 2011, were declared territories free from illiteracy.

The Cuban 'Yo si puedo' method — which received two honorary mentions from the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) in 2002 and 2003 — has 14 versions, eight of them in Spanish, one in English, another one in Portuguese, and one in Creole for Haiti. There are also versions in Aymara and Quechua for Bolivia, and in Tetum, for East Timor. — (ACN)

From: <http://www.jayblessed.com/2012/01/23/cuban-literacy-method-benefits-almost-six-million-people-around-the-world/>

---

# Yo Si Puedo Alphabetization program, Bolivia

Héctor Mediavilla

The Cuban literacy program “YO SI PUEDO” (I do can), approved by the UNESCO, has been successfully implemented in 20 countries all over the world. Bolivian Ministry of Education has the goal of eradicating illiteracy, that affects around 20% of the population, in the next 4 years. This innovative method consists on TV lessons for a group of around 20 people where a 25” TV set, a VHS video recorder and a pack of 65 VHS tape lessons are required. The group is leaded by a competent member of the community during 3 months to complete the Basic literacy course. YO SI PUEDO program was officially opened in March 2006. There are around 12.000 literacy points spread all over the country. Courses have been recorded in Spanish and in native languages such as Quechua and Aymara.

From:

[http://picturetank.com/\\_/series/84bdc94c53c59e158d03e759d45553b7/en/a/MEH Yo Si Puedo.html](http://picturetank.com/_/series/84bdc94c53c59e158d03e759d45553b7/en/a/MEH_Yo_Si_Puedo.html)

---

# Yo sí Puedo, a Cuban literacy program

YouTube: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DkmunaBibTA>

---

In the process of researching the above, we discovered a Cuban Spanish-Language equivalent of Wikipedia, at:

[http://www.ecured.cu/index.php/EcuRed:Enciclopedia\\_cubana](http://www.ecured.cu/index.php/EcuRed:Enciclopedia_cubana)

---

- To download any of the CU courses in PDF files [please click here](#).
- 

**Course: Languages**

**26004, Introductions to Parts 7 and 8**

1365 words